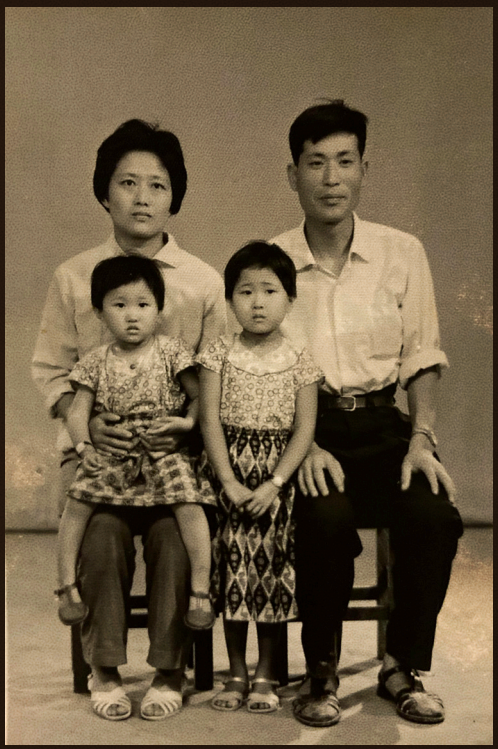
hold

the

feeling



This is a collection of writing, illustration, photography, and design from Asian American creatives at Northwestern. Through this zine, we seek to engage Asian Americans at Northwestern in reflection about identity, heritage, and culture, while spotlighting the diverse talent on our campus.

The title, *Hold the Feeling*, comes from a line in April Li's poem "Fishing Lines." It represents the zine's overarching theme: generations. These creative works tell the stories of intergenerational resistance, progression, growth, wisdom, pain, histories, legacies, and more.

We are so grateful to everyone who helped make this project a reality. We hope that as you flip through this zine, you find empathy, solace, connection, or anything else that may arise. While recognizing the limits of catch-all categories like "Asian American," we still find community building through identity to be a beautiful thing, and we appreciate the people before us, those who are with us now, and the ones that will come after.

ZINE DIRECTION Josh Chen (Art Direction), Lily Ng, Caitlin Wu **LOGISTICS** Sophia Liu, Josh Sanford
PROMOTIONS Cindy Ha, Ling King, Chelsea Lu, Meena Sharma, Michelle Sheen

Top images (left to right): Josh and his parents and siblings; Lily's mother (bottom right) with Lily's grandparents, aunts, and uncles; Caitlin's mother and father.

- **Where I'm From**
  Cindy Ha
  Designed by Annie Xia

- **The Fading**
  Megumi Oishi
  Designed by Yena Son

- **Fishing Lines**
  April Li
  Designed by Esther Lim

- **Rooted (excerpts)**
  Yash Markendey
  A persevering past /
  An exhausted reality /
  A grand (parent's) journey
  Designed by Esther Lim

- **Moon Spirit**
  Roy Zhu
  Designed by Josh Chen

- **Movie Review: Everything Everywhere All at Once**
  Kaylyn Ahn
  Designed by Michelle Sheen

- **Overcoming**
  Jae Pinkner
  Designed by Jae Pinkner

- **What's in the Wok**
  Ysa Quiballo
  Designed by Ysa Quiballo

- **This is Calcutta**
  Abhijit Roy
  Designed by Jae Pinkner

- **Trains That Go Home**
  Abhijit Roy
  Designed by Jae Pinkner

- **Sedona**
  Roy Zhu
  Designed by Alicia Cai

- **Your Future**
  Hunter Lee
  Designed by Michelle Sheen

Where I'm from

Cindy Ha

You ask me, "Where are you from?" and I hesitate.

How long are five years in a distant country?

For eight-year-old Cindy who came to America, it was more than half her life. For eighteen-year-old Cindy, it's a foreign memory full of nostalgia and heartache. It's glimpses of another life she lived.

But where I'm from, everyone still says Saigon instead of Ho Chi Minh City. We might have been split, renamed, put back together again, but the people never lost their roots, even as Agent Orange killed them all.

Where I'm from, the traffic lights are optional. It's a jungle of mopeds and pedestrians, all fighting to get to their destination.

Where I'm from, there are fields next to the roads where rice paper dries on top of bamboo mats. They're used to make gỏi cuốn or bánh tráng trộn, two dishes that never taste the same here.

Where I'm from, people say "Hello" too. But the h is silent, and it sounds a lot more like "A-loe".

Where I'm from, you go across the street to the stall selling bánh mì for breakfast. It costs less than fifty cents, but you're gifted with fresh baked baguettes and plenty of meat anyway.

Nothing costs much where I'm from, but where I'm from, people don't have much.

You ask me, "Where are you from?"
"I'm from Vietnam," I answer.

"KEY"
gỏi cuốn - spring rolls
bánh tráng trộn - rice paper salad
bánh mì - vietnamese sandwich

The Fading

Megumi Oishi

“Okaasan, you look so pretty in this picture!”

Akari points at a picture in the photo album. She and her mother are sitting on the living room floor, flipping through old, yellowed pictures in the album. Akari peers at the photo up close. Her mother looks stoic, for being so young. The kimono is black, with red-capped cranes flying across the silk fabric. Every detail, every stitch, every color, is meant to be where it is.

Akari’s eyes sparkle - she’s never seen anything like it.

“Yes, that’s my kimono. My mother made it for me, I remember.” Mother says.

“How old were you in this photo?”

“Probably around your age; 9 or 10. I have it in my closet.”

“Can I wear it?”

“Oh, no.” Mother shakes her head. “My okaasan made it just for me. It only fits me, Akari.”

“But I want to wear it! For Halloween.” Akari’s mother flinches.

“Halloween?” she says, scrunching her nose. “Akari no, this kimono is very...”

“Okaasan~!” Akari whines. “Please!”

“Akari, no, it’s too small. And besides, it’s very...”

“Please!”

“Okay,” Mother sighs. “Very well.”

She stands up and leaves. After a few minutes, she comes back with a bundle, wrapped in white paper. As Mother spreads it out on the ground, Akari marvels at how beautiful the kimono is. She sees the cranes flying across the front, just like in the photo...

“We’ll have to alter it,” Mother sighs again. She pats the silk, like she would a baby’s belly.

“When will it be ready?”

“By Halloween,” Mother promises.

Every day following, Mother sits at the living room table and sews. She sits in the living room as Akari returns from school, does her homework, and sometimes into the early hours of dusk.

One day, Akari returns from school. She sets down her backpack and runs to her mother,who is cutting small threads off of the kimono. It’s hard for Akari to catch Mother’s attention over the rhythmic snips of the small scissors.

“Okaasan,” she calls to Mother. Mother’s hands stop, and she looks over.

“I hope it’s okay. I don’t want to wear the kimono to Halloween anymore.”

Mother does not speak for a moment, but then nods her head, and folds the kimono in her arms.

“Okay. Very well. What would you like to wear?”

“I want to be like Ashley. She’s wearing an Aurora costume!”

“Alright.” Mother says, after another pause. She stands and grabs her worn purse off of the table. “I’ll go and buy you an Aurora costume. Just in time for Halloween.”

As Mother’s fingers wrap around the leather, Akari sees small red dots and scratches on her fingertips. She tries to ask about them, but her mother has already gone out the door.

“Mom, look at this picture of you! Is this from Halloween?”

“Yes,” Akari says. Her nine year-old daughter, Mia, clutches the photo album as they sit on the couch together. “Careful not to crinkle the photos.”

“Who are you dressed as?”

“Aurora, just like you will be this year!”

“Awe, Mom, you look like a beautiful princess!”

“Yes,” Akari smiles. She looks down at the grainy picture, traces the plastic edges with

her fingertip. “But I could have looked more beautiful.”

“What do you mean?”

“Nothing. Oh, I forgot. I finished your dress.” Akari stands and leaves the room, coming back with a dress — a pink, silky dress, wrapped in plastic.

“Thank you!” Mia grins, grabbing the dress.

Akari wants to scream, “careful!” as her daughter nabs the dress, but she stops herself.

Mia doesn’t know — she won’t know, not for a while. Akari puts her hands behind her back as she watches Mia unwrap the dress with a flurry of hands. She wants to rub her eyes, but instead, she blinks hard. Her shoulders are tight, so she rolls them back and straightens her posture. Most of all, her fingertips hurt, dotted with red dots and scratches, so she hides them behind her back, pushes them into her back pockets.

FISHING LINES
BY APRIL LI AFTER OCEAN VUONG

And now, I still hear the arc of invisible lines
cast into lakes, surface breaking like a pane

cracked by our baseball games, sunfish frying as
if meat & cartilage each meal is enough to erase

the sharp ribs under thin skin, stolen
bread kneaded from sister's hunger & unpacked

debt, adobe house full & cracked with starving
young siblings, the fatherless stories hid by fibs

& concealed from your kids, I still picture the streets you walked dawn silent
with blood, strewn bikes with no riders, a flight

& a new state praised as a new start to realize
a dream everyone keeps chasing, I still see the training

of sealed lips learned from first father then husband, yield
in the fields & factories, a lifetime of desires concealed

with insistence on the tongue of lullabies, sisters
only seen through screens, I still know your skin's grain,

face alone, static coming through speakers
when your voice glitched 口罩, 口罩 — and yet

if there's one thing, let me hold the feeling
of the thickened skin on your palms that caught me on hot

pavement when I fell. Please — let me remember your voice
when you sang me to sleep, deep & worn, from blackened

lungs, when I listened not asking how you learned those songs
as I slept to the ash settling — & hope

I don't forget.

From afar, I sit here talking about a past.
It weighs on my shoulder, whispering stories
about a time. separated
by religion, politics, and caste.

It wonders through my mind,
intertwining its trauma with mine,
creating a creature of displacement,
hungry for a home. The one I left behind.

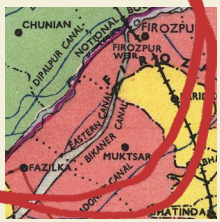
A persevering past

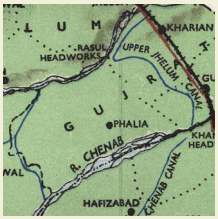
Yash Markendey

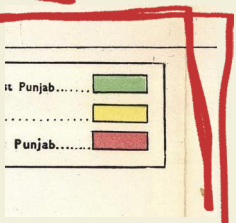
It runs through my veins,
Traversing under the surface of my scarred skin,
Searching for a blood-red river of belonging
Only to find a susceptible heart. The one that remained.

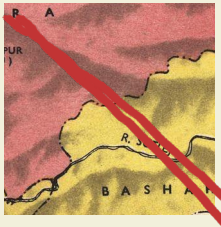
It hums along with my voice,
Trembling with every ode to you.
Pulsating with the vibrations of our songs,
Fading along with you, wondering if we'll ever rejoice.

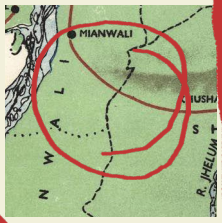
persevering past a

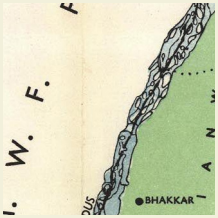


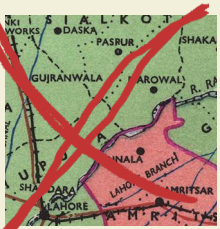


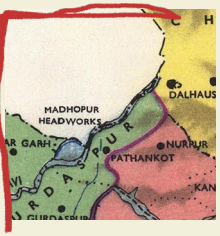


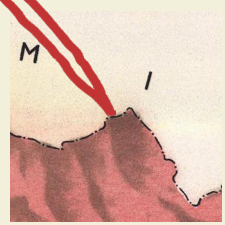


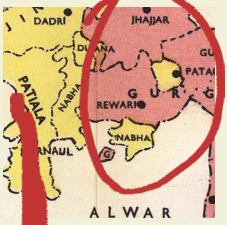


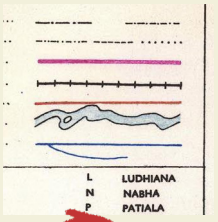


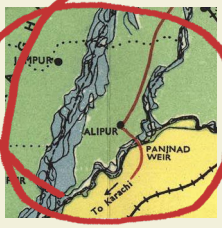


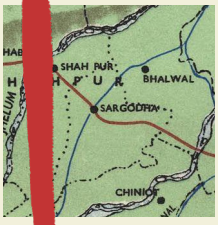












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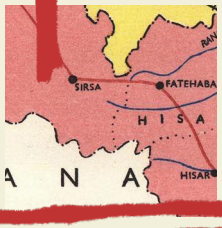
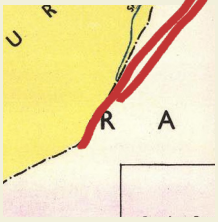




An exhausted reality

Yash Markendey

Where is my blessed homeland?
Ingrained in the hollow earth, my crimson blood, or the passing sand?
Do I look towards the sun or the shadow fading behind,
Knowing that I left you for an ideal life, beyond my mind?

Startled by the abundance of innocent death,
I remember running relentlessly over the bloodied soil, so out of breath.
My lungs are tired, respiring our toxic love,
Knowing that it's over now, bleak as the dusk above.

It's time to build a home, to dust off the keys
That once unlocked my feelings, now gone in a breeze.
My blood runs blue, deoxygenated without your trust,
Knowing that our hearts together will never rust.

Rooted in our unrequited desire,
we found a dreamland to keep burning this blazing fire.
But you are just a stranger, in a bordered land anew,
Living a new reality, knowing our flaming future was too good to be true.

A grand(parents') journey

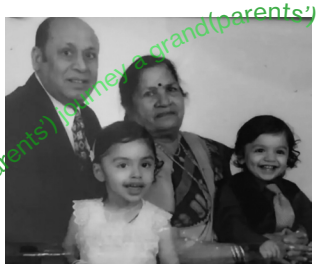
Paper-crumpled dreams, tossed
into old leather-seamed baggage,
carried itself into a land anew.
An island, it was, with no warm face around
only rough-looking Englishmen staring down.

Go back to where you came from, they said
you don't belong
to a nation unheard of,
or the one you loved.
you were displaced, a lost toy bashed around
escaping the cacophony of violence
in your 'desh's' playground.

You tread through this new 'pind,' smiling outside
with your future in one hand and the past behind.
The other hand held onto battered bags of hope
painful from paving a path, one of a kind.
your story is unique, but part of a wave
of dreamers and downtrodden people in a country, insane.

Divided by choice, you wonder all the time
if only it was yours to leave it all behind.
To grow a family, you needed some time.
No time to heal here, they said, just keep moving forward
No more crying over a nation with its heart split in two,
it's torn and broken, but it will grow again soon.

Key:
Desh – Country
Pind – Village



Yash Markendey

You made a home abroad, a garden, a sanctuary if you please
And earned the gift of six kids, grandkids, and a dream.
Thank you for the sacrifices and life of ease.
It's not easy to plant a future and grow your self-esteem,
far away from your familiar roots,
traumatising, unspoken and unseen.

As I fly to new terrain, I look to the serene sky,
awaiting your forgiving smile.
You are a part of my course ahead, paving the way,
for me to break barriers, in new atmospheres.

Clear skies, unchartered waters, unseen shores
with only a passport of hardships, opening doors.
But I have limitless pages of our love,
full of fading stamps of generational trauma, guilt, and shame.
Lighter baggage in hand, I'm ready to take on more,
Time to cultivate a new dream, unlike anything before.

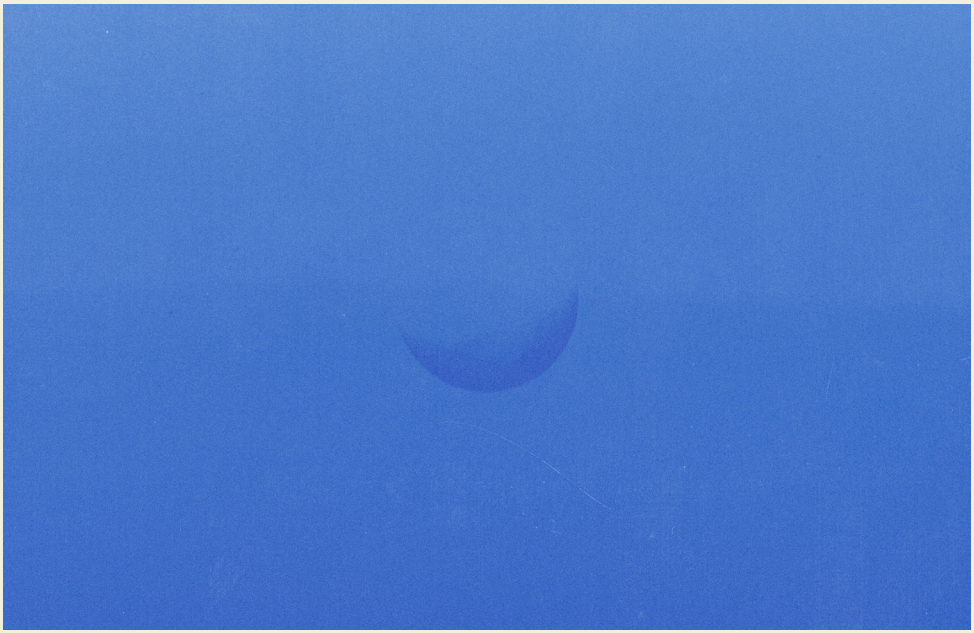
Moon Spirit
Roy Zhu

In my dreams I tell them that they are not real
Just a reflection in passing, just an echo in the sound of my voice.
One in many yearnings, or many yearnings as one.
A strangeness floating above the table where my fathers sit.
I tell them not to listen too closely to the music, not to dance
Out the wild manything, many-armed, and wise.
Not to be joyful in the forbidden and uncountable, my heart
Reminds them they are dreaming.

One day it is cold and I pull a blanket around myself,
And in the mirror I catch myself looking too long
And remember how, when I was a child, I used to pretend
To wear dresses dark and subtle, ones that played with light
Like nightfall, a beautiful down feathered cloak
Stained with the rose-scented perfume my mother wore
On occasions we allowed ourselves to be beautiful.

Starlit evenings when my father would point out the moon,
Tell us how Chang'e and her rabbit spirit escaped earth
To become her. I felt my first great longing.
I wondered if they were lonely. The moon.
In the mirror, they drape my blanket around my shoulders,
Holding it gently against the back of my warm animal neck.

When I leave the mirror I know I am descending
To morning and earth alone.



everything everywhere all at once

movie review

written by kaylyn ahn

When I come back to my dorm after a really long day, I have this fantasy that the dad from "Everything Everywhere All at Once" opens my door, dressed in slacks and an oversized knit sweater from goodwill. "I'm proud of you," he says with an Asian accent, kisses me on the forehead, and hugs me. And he holds me. I pretend like my arms are his arms, and I hold myself. And in this moment when my eyes are shut, and when I am in this private corner of the world, in this space where there is nothing to prove or judge or tell, I always come back to him.

This past new year, my friends and I celebrated one year since my dad left me.

My dad and I always had a strained relationship. He was abusive and prone to bouts of anger, like throwing 90 pound chairs at me, threatening to kill me, telling me to commit suicide everyday when I was eleven type of anger.

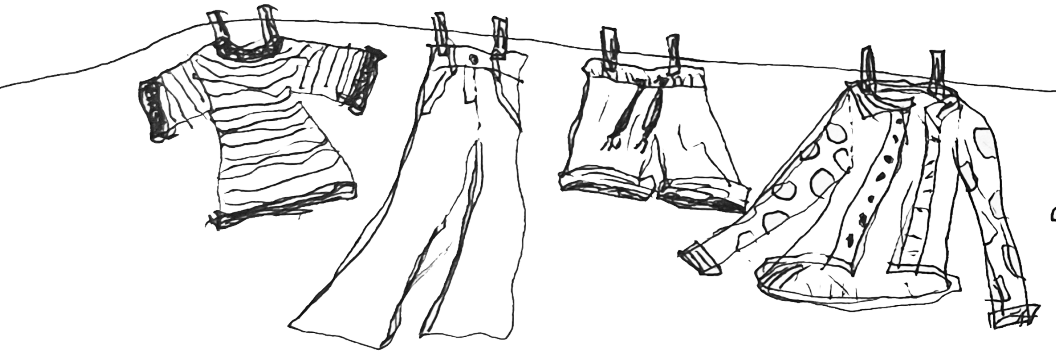
I have never hugged him. The first time he said I love you was when I accused him of child abuse.

During highschool, I was 5 ‘3 and teetering between 85-90 pounds because he wouldn’t feed us except Wendy’s 4 for 4 meals. I was malnourished for most of my childhood. I went nearly the whole day without food at times.

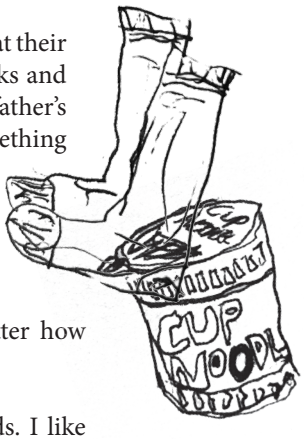
My friends and I don’t talk about my dad much. I mean, what is there to talk about? I wouldn’t be able to start a conversation without it being a downer. I like to make it seem like I do not care about the fact that he has not talked to me in over a year. Or the fact that I see parents of international students fly to the United States to see their kids while my parents live a 30 minute drive away.

It is not fun to have Daddy issues. It is not fun to be abandoned by your dad. Sometimes it's like a tragic villain origin backstory that makes Tinder dates think I have more depth than the average hookup or something traumatic I can write about in a college essay.

nothing matters.
Huebsch
Huebsch
nothing matters.



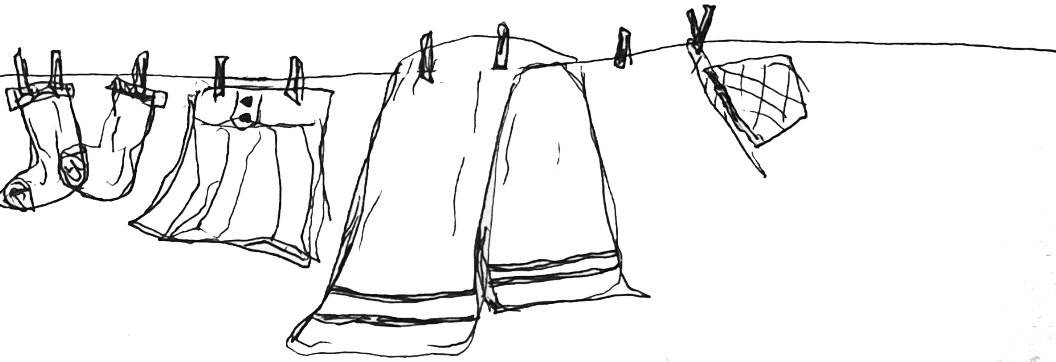
But at the end of the day, I will always dream of Waymond from Everything Everywhere All At Once. No matter how many good grades I get, how many awards I get, I will never have Waymond cheering me on at the finish line. I realized very early on that you can't just study harder to get a dad, that having a dad isn't about how smart, how funny, how kind, or how hardworking you are. You just are. And he loves you for that. And I hate it.



And so everytime someone mentions a funny text that their dad sent, or a care package their mom made with socks and ramen, or that they're leaving for the weekend to spend father's day at home, I will always smile and respond with something like, "that's so fun" or "that is so sweet of you."

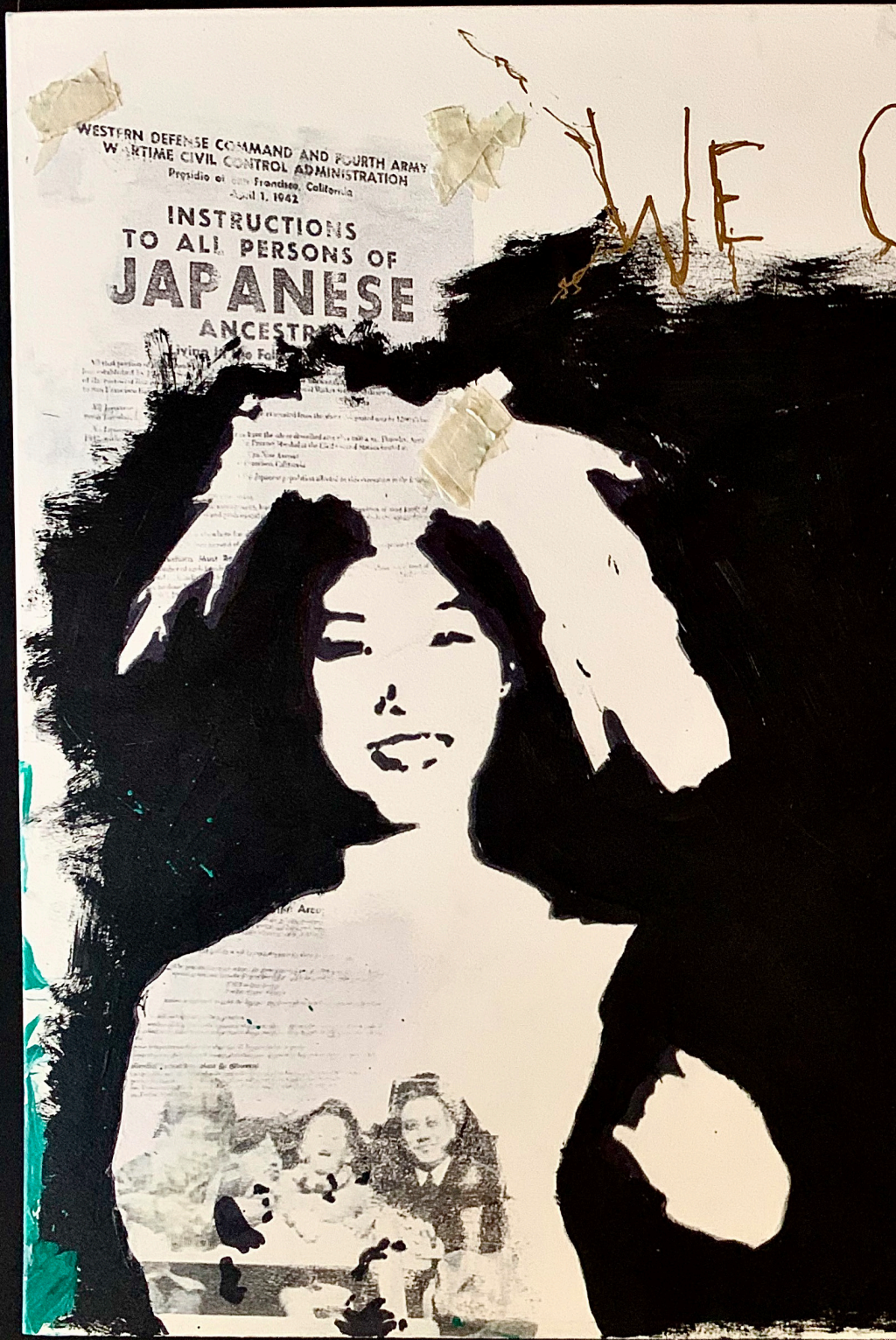
But in those brief moments, in that flash before all the years of learning how to suppress it rapidly flood through my body, all I feel is this ache, this sting, this dull pain that will never go away, no matter how much I try to run away from it.

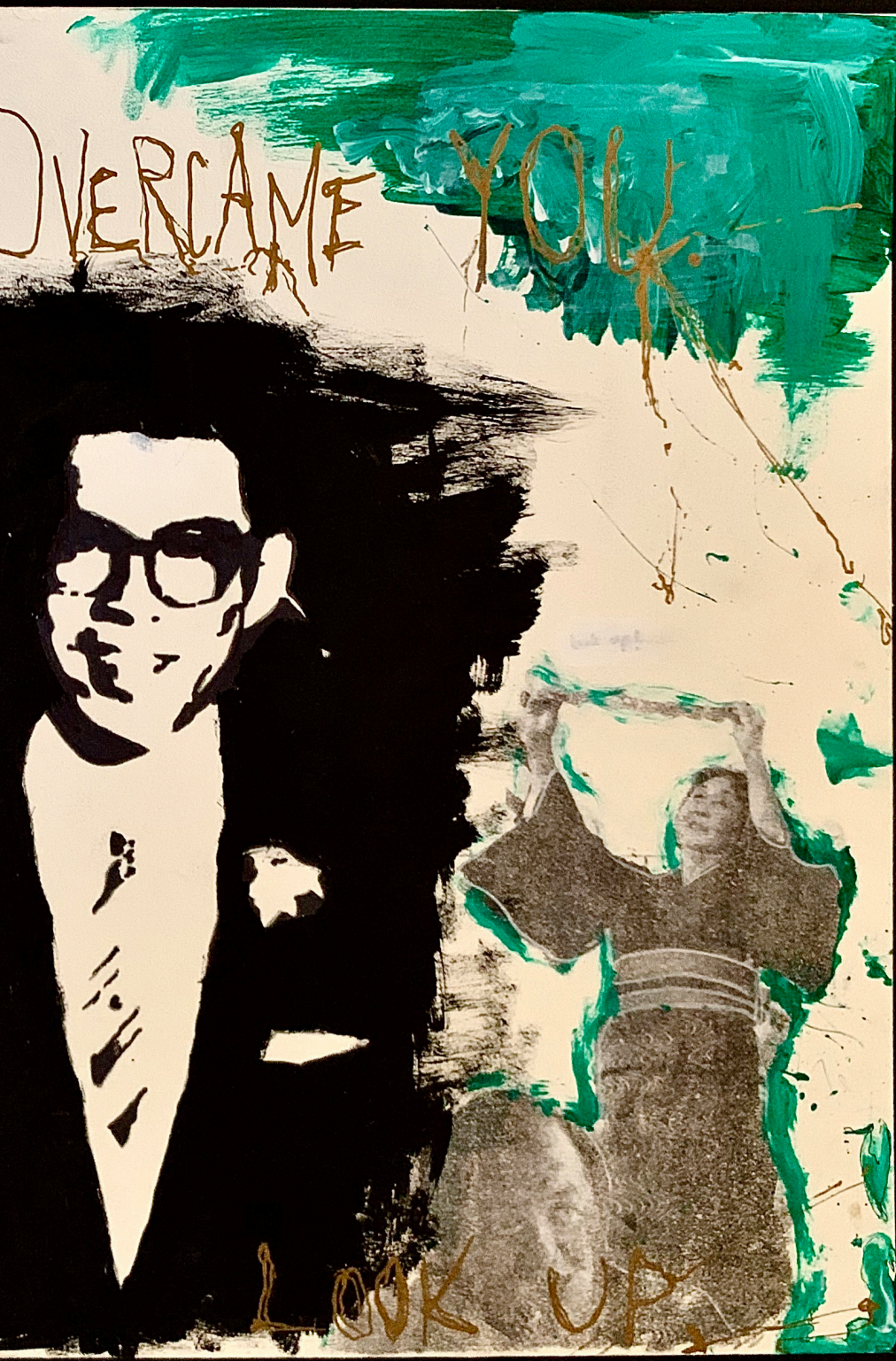
I like how Everything Everywhere All at Once ends. I like how the mother apologizes to the daughter, how they learn about the importance of kindness, and how we have a happily ever after with a family that is intact, where everybody loves each other. I watch it over and over and over again because it feels like my story is being told but with a good ending. Where Joy doesn't go into the bagel's abyss, where I never attempted suicide, where I never had to be partially hospitalized on my own, where I never had to go through the sharp corners of the world by myself. As if a movie could reverse all the times my parents should have been there for me, as I could relive all the universes in which my dad just called me, once, just once.



everything everywhere

I am addicted to Everything Everywhere All At Once because it feels like I am reliving a perfect picture fantasy, where for 2 hours and 19 minutes, I can hold myself in my arms and imagine Evelyn and Waymond holding me and telling me over and over again about how proud they are and how much they love me. Because that's what it is afterall, a movie. Waymond is a character that has never existed and never will. I will always dream of a father I never had.


WESTERN DEFENSE COMMAND AND FOURTH ARMY
WARTIME CIVIL CONTROL ADMINISTRATION
Presidio of San Francisco, California
April 1, 1942
INSTRUCTIONS
TO ALL PERSONS OF
JAPANESE
ANCESTRY


OVERCAME
YOU.
LOOK UP.

JAPANESE

Overcoming
By Jae Pinkner

This piece is inspired by the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II. My grandparents, Mutsumi and Reiko Iwanaga, were taken from their homes and placed in internment camps when they were only toddlers (despite the fact that their parents were born in the US and had fully settled American lives). They gracefully and courageously overcame that injustice and oppression, creating amazing lives for themselves and their children. This painting, of my grandparents on their wedding day, is dedicated to their strength and power in overcoming adversity.

What's in the Wok

I never knew my lola. Every few months, I would hear her voice crackle through the phone from the other side of the earth. On the mantel, I would see her in picture frames, always dancing or smiling or laughing. When I would pull from the bin the blanket she had crocheted for me, my hands would touch the same stitches hers made.

Then when I was fourteen, she got sick. Her lungs weren't working. My dad booked a flight. I knew I should do something, feel something, write something. But how do you write to a stranger who has impacted your life in countless ways?

There are few things that carry the same weight as death. Whether they're massive, overwhelming events or quiet, invisible realizations, there are certain things that wield powerful truths, forcing you to look up from your tiny, little world and see everything else. There in the Everything Else, I saw my lola. I pictured her clutching my dad's and his siblings' hands in front of the Philippines airport. I saw her take a deep breath and stand a little taller as she surveyed the bustling landscape where she would build a life for her children. I watched her take my life and my children's lives and the coming generations' lives in her hands, molding the clay with her own human-sized life and human-sized strength and fashion it into a monument of a love so powerful it traversed the miles, years, and any other obstructive measurement between us.

And yet, on this side of the world between cultures, continents, and lifestyles, there are things I've never heard about. There are things that stayed in the Everything Else and kept my lola a stranger to me. I never learned Tagalog. I heard my mom's parents argue with the brash, clobbering syllables. I used a few Tagalog words before I knew the English ones. I called my brother kuya and made my little cousins call me ate. But, it was never like English.

The time I felt most immersed in Filipino culture was at the holiday gatherings. We crammed ourselves into someone's home and my siblings and I would greet each of the lolos and lolas. As we hugged and they squished our cheeks, they always asked us, "What's my name?" With over fifty relatives, one or two gatherings per year, and it's-too-late-to-ask-now embarrassment, I honestly did not know. I recognized their faces each year, but they remained nameless. Wandering around the house, I attempted to listen to the conversations, tentatively nodding and joining the roar of laughter after unknown punchlines while the lolas rambled on in a world that was completely muffled to me. I was immersed in their world but I was not a part of it.

However, there was always one table where I never felt out of place: the food table. Surrounded by rich caldareta, tangy pancit bihon, and creamy kare kare, my taste buds understood the language my tongue could not. In the grand spread of tins, woks, and tupperwares, the dishes would often include strange ingredients and unique flavors, but they were the flavors I grew up with--the ones that felt not like home but felt like me.

When we visited Florida to see my Lola Susan, my lola's sister-in-law, she taught me how to make my favorite dish: pancit canton. Barefoot in the white tile kitchen, she held the wok and wooden spoon in her hands as she drew out the names of the ingredients. "Some shriiimp and some garliiic and some spinaaach. Whatever you have, just throw it in." Sizzling in the wok, the savory aroma of the noodles and medley of ingredients filled the air, growing richer in flavor and depth with each new vegetable Lola tossed in.

I loved being around her and her sunshine smile and laugh that tickled your own lungs. Constantly telling stories, she brought unknown history out of the Everything Else as she sprinkled our lives with new flavors. But then she handed the wooden spoon to me. "You mix, you mix," she commanded. Actually, it ended up tasting even better than how I remembered. Now, here, I'm in charge of making the pancit canton. Although sometimes people can be far away, that doesn't mean their recipes will go uncooked, or their stories untold, or our lives unchanged.

When people talk about legacy, they talk about going back to their roots. But here, America is like a grafted tree. My lola broke herself off of the tree she had grown from in order to be tied to, pushed against, and grafted into the tree of America. Though she went back to the Philippines before she died, she left the branches of her family to grow here.

Ysa

Tenko

Quiballo

There are still stories I will never learn, Tagalog I will never grasp, and names I will never know. Older generations pushed into the future, toiling to cultivate a garden of captivating beauty while we are left wondering what lies below the surface. But perhaps, for now, we can be satisfied in the present, enjoying all the flavors of the pancit canton and embracing all the branches of the tree.

In my lola's last days, I looked around at the worlds I belonged to and the ones I didn't and I decided that it was a gift. It was a gift of both sacrifice and gain, estrangement and connection, hello and goodbye. At the end of my letter to a familiar stranger, gardener, and hero, I wrote, "Lola, I wish I could give you a garden as beautiful as you are, and the one you've created with your life, but all I can give you is gratitude. I love you."

So here I am, wooden spoon in my hand, mixing the ingredients that my lolos and lolas have already tossed in the wok, and ready to add a few spices of my own.

This is Calcutta

Abhijit Roy

This is that city,
that city of tea, Silk Cut and endless card games.

Where pavement bricks lie naked
under crumbling facades of cement,
where the pungent smell of tobacco and garbage
rise from near where the flower lady sits.
Beside her jasmines and daliahs and neem,
The pot-bellied pimp implores the world.

This is that city,
that city of tea, Silk Cut and endless card games.

Face after face after face
Calcutta, she takes them in.
Those who came from far away,
alongside those who will never return.
Punctuated by Church Lane kitchens,
College Street books, and adda.

This is that city,
that city of tea, Silk Cut and endless card games.

Yellow taxis, green autos,
fewer blue buses than red,
The whites went, as did the reds,
she watched waiting for her chai.
Many claimed her, but she bites back hard,
now the pretender arrives, ready to fall.

This is my city,
my city of tea, Silk Cut and endless card games.

This is that city,that city of tea, Silk Cut and endless card games. Where pavement bricks lie naked under crumbling facades of cement, where the pungent smell of tobacco and garbage rise from near where the flower lady sits. Beside her jasmines and daliahs and neem, The pot-bellied pimp implores the world.This is that city, that city of tea, Silk Cut and endless card games. Face after face after face Calcutta, she takes them in. Those who came from far away, alongside those who will never return. Punctuated by Church Lane kitchens, College Street books, and adda.This is that city,that city of tea, Silk Cut and endless card games. Yellow taxis, green autos, fewer blue buses than red,The whites went, as did the reds, she watched waiting for her chai. Many claimed her, but she bites back hard, now the pretender arrives, ready to fall. This is my city,my city of tea, Silk Cut and endless card games. This is that city the city of tea, Silk Cut and

SILK CUT NUMBER 1
FILTER TIPPED
BENSON and HEDGES
SILK CUT NUMBER 3
FILTER TIPPED
BENSON and HEDGES
SILK CUT NUMBER 5
VENTILATED FILTER
BENSON and HEDGES
SILK CUT
FILTER TIPPED
BENSON and HEDGES
SILK CUT KING SIZE
FILTER TIPPED
BENSON and HEDGES
SILK CUT
KING SIZE FILTER
BENSON and HEDGES
THIS IS MY CITY

Trains That Go Home

Abhijit Roy

The trains that go home,
from noisy platforms,
to quieter shores
and humbler doors.
Litter on tracks,
minstrels on sidewalks,
While we wait
‘neath dirty sun and no shade.

Trembling cabins,
the gentle sway
of a journey
that started far away.
Gold was promised,
gold was sought,
naught was gotten,
naught was wrought.

Meet a stranger,
hear a story,
share a cigarette,
share his woes.
Call on a friend,
tell him farewell,
you’ll be returning,
another man.

The trains that go home,
from noisy platforms,
to quieter shores
and humbler doors.
The faiths and fears
of love,
the joys of hope
on the trains that go home.

The faiths and fears of love

the joys of hope

on the trains

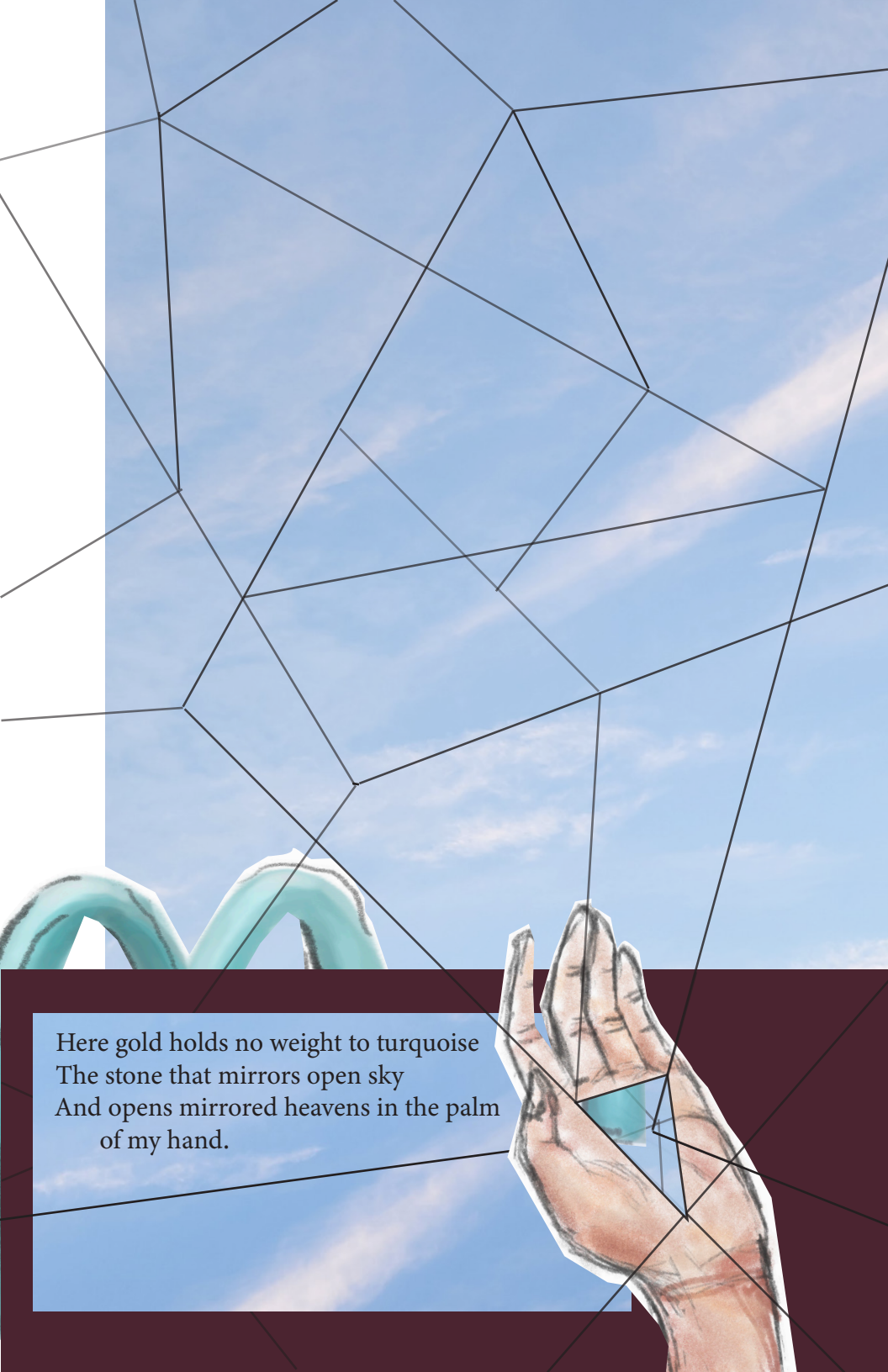
that go

home.

Se · do · na

Roy Zhu

Did you know
Sedona, Arizona
Is the only place in the world
Where the McDonald's arches are blue?


Here gold holds no weight to turquoise
The stone that mirrors open sky
And opens mirrored heavens in the palm
of my hand.

On the interstate I learn the word *turquoise*
And hope for veins of blue
To rise from the desert rose.
I learn the word *interstate* too
Along with *ghost town* and *oil springs*,
Canyonland and *Mesa Grande*.

Outside the Bryce Canyon gift shop
I rattle jetstone magnets in my palm,
Translating guidebooks into murky Chinese,
Angry at proper nouns
Which shatter before reaching my parents' tongue

你知不知道
Sedona, A 利 zona
是世界上唯一的地放
McDonald's 的 arches 是蓝色得?

Unspoken between lines
I translate myself.

Somehow in all this,
I am becoming American:
Flagstaff to Sedona,
One-way translation.

당신의 미래

Your Future

당신의 미래

Remember the past
find who you are now

♡♡
이정아

Hunter Lee

Growing up, I buried my Korean identity to the point where I firmly believed I was part of the 84% White population in my town. But no matter how well I assimilated, I would always be identified as Asian because of my appearance. Thus, I stumbled through my school years as a contradiction: the way people viewed me and the way I viewed myself always at odds.

As I matured, I began to see the internal and external damage I had caused in refusing to learn the language and culture of my family's home country.
So I turned my attention to my withered Korean identity and began to nurture it:
I felt nervous as I let go of the race based restrictions I put on my relationships. I felt like an imposter as I attempted to learn the Korean language.

I was so afraid of being caught watching a kdrama that I hid under my blankets and wore headphones. I tackled the discomfort and foreignness of using my Korean name (written below the two hearts, 이정아).

Over time, my shame and embarrassment began to disperse as my Korean identity found a comfortable hold in my life. 당신의 미래 reflects this journey: from the resolution of guilt about my past to the blossoming of a truer, more authentic identity.

With every shed leaf and budding flower, my future self takes shape.

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당신의 미래

WITH EVERY SHED LEAF AN

D

BUDDING

FLOWER,

MY
FUTURE
SELF TAKES
SHAPE.